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PIRACY.

The reports which have been in circulation in the settlement for the last few days, regarding a daring act of piracy, and the accounts of the increasing numbers of these lawless marauders in this immediate neighbourhood, have contributed, and very justly, to excite, in no small degree, the fears of the native merchants for the security of their property. It appears they are all, more or less, in the habit of shipping goods on their own account by the native craft, to the various adjacent ports, and also of selling on credit to the traders themselves; and are almost entirely dependent upon the regularity of the returns, to enable them to meet their engagements to the European merchants, who are their principal creditors here. If these wretches are allowed to increase and multiply, and commit their depredations upon the peaceable traders, within a few hours' sail of this port, without either check or control, the consequences, in a very short time, cannot fail to become serious. The most respectable native merchants seem to be perfectly astonished that no efforts whatever are used on the part of Government to put a stop to the desolating progress of these daring plunderers; and we think, with them, that it is high time that some attempt should be made by some one to destroy them, or, at all events, to chase them out of the haunts in which they now lurk. If the trade of this settlement is of any importance at all, it is surely worthy of being protected against the depredations of these robbers; and that its existence is not altogether a matter of perfect indifference may be inferred from the amount of imports for 1827-28, which, according to the statement published in the *Singapore Chronicle* of the 11th of September last, amounted to nearly fifteen millions of sicca rupees. We have occasion to know, likewise, that, during the last three months merely, not less than from £40,000 to £50,000 worth of British manufactured goods have been disposed of in this place, which is, at all events, presumptive evidence that Singapore, as a mart for our manufactures, is not entirely valueless to the mother country.

It is the opinion of one of the most experienced commanders in the Straits, that, unless some vigorous measures are speedily adopted for the purpose of checking the progress of the pirates, they will shortly become as numerous and as desperate as they were before a single European settlement was founded in these parts; but if proper means are used without delay, and followed up with spirit, the Straits may be almost completely cleared of them in the course of a few months, and at comparatively trifling expense. If, then,

this is really the case (and that it is so we have not the slightest doubt), how happens it that no attempts whatever are made to expel these daring plunderers from our shores? Why this worse than stoical indifference to the interests and commercial prosperity of these settlements?—*Sing. Chron.*, Sept. 10.

TRADE WITH CAMPAR.

Campar is an ancient Malayan state on the east coast of Sumatra, lying between the rivers of Siak and Daneer. The mouth of the Campar river is situated in about 0° 38' N. latitude, and 102° 51' E. longitude, and extends in a southerly direction a short distance inland, and then branches off to the right and left. The country on the left branch of the river is called Campar Kiri, and that on the right is denominated Campar Kanan, or *left* and *right* Campar. For twelve or fourteen days' journey up each branch of the river the country is described as being low and flat, and to the extent of a mile or two on each side it is said to be in a state of tolerable cultivation. The banks of both rivers, we are told, are studded with villages, but that the right branch is more populous, and the country under better cultivation. The principal productions are rice, coco and betel-nuts, gambier, sugar-cane, and rattans. The people of Campar carry on a very considerable trade with the inhabitants of the interior, and with Singapore. The inhabitants of the central districts bring coffee and cassia, which they barter for various kinds of Indian and European manufactures which the prows take from Singapore.

The trade of Campar with this settlement is entirely in the hands of Malays (there being no Chinese settlers there), and is carried on by means of small prows of from 50 to 200 piculs burden, which regularly visit us monthly, in small fleets of ten or twelve prows. The numerous straits in this neighbourhood, but more particularly those near the coast of Sumatra, are said to be infested with pirates, which obliges these traders to come in fleets for mutual protection. They carry from fifteen to thirty men, and are armed with two long brass guns, spears, swords, &c., which render them formidable opponents to the pirates; so much so, indeed, that they are seldom or never attacked. The cargoes these vessels bring here consist principally of coffee, but they also bring a few piculs of gambier, bees'-wax, twine, and cassia, of an inferior quality; likewise elephants' teeth, rhinoceros' horns, and a few rattans. They vary in value, according to the size of the prow, from 500 to 2,000 Sp. drs. These articles they very readily dispose of, almost immediately on their arrival, to the Chinese merchants, and receive in return blue and unbleached